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Letter dated 6 June 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing to you in your capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of June following yesterday's gruesome terrorist attack in northern Israel, in which a terrorist detonated a car packed with explosives alongside a public bus, killing 17 young Israelis and wounding more than 40 others. In recent weeks, in the face of a renewed wave of terrorist attacks, Israel has exercised tremendous restraint in order to maximize the potential of the diplomatic efforts currently under way.

Yesterday's bombing was a deliberate attack on a civilian target that aimed to claim as many innocent lives as possible. As the Council itself has affirmed in resolutions 1269 (1999), 1373 (2001) and others, there can never be a justification for the wilful targeting of civilians. In the words of the Secretary-General, "There can be no acceptance of those who would seek to justify the deliberate taking of innocent civilian life, regardless of cause or grievance. If there is one universal principle that all peoples can agree on, surely it is this."

The claim of responsibility for the attack came from the headquarters of Islamic Jihad, a terrorist organization committed to the destruction of the State of Israel that is based in the Syrian capital of Damascus. Islamic Jihad, along with the Lebanon-based Hizbullah, are but two of the numerous internationally recognized terrorist groups to which the Syrian Government has long provided safe haven and financial and logistical support.

Israel is appalled that a member of the Security Council continues to lend its support to organizations committed to the deliberate murder of civilians. Such actions stand in clear violation of the Council's own resolutions, which mandate that States must prevent their territory from lending any support, financial or otherwise, to terrorist organizations.

Moreover, yesterday's attack comes at the precise moment that Syria holds the rotating Presidency of the Council and at a time when the fight against terrorism is at the top of the Council's agenda. It is astounding that Syria is brazenly supporting attempts to subvert the anti-terrorist objectives of an international body of which it itself is President. The international community must demand that the Government of Syria immediately halt its support for the terrorist groups to which it grants safe harbour in its territory and abide scrupulously by its international obligations and the resolutions of the Security Council.

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I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative